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ABSTRACT

This report of the current position of Spanish Americans who are farm wage workers is based on data collected for the Economic Research Service of the Department of Agriculture by the Bureau of Census in a supplement to the February, 1961 Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS data are based on a national sample of the civilian noninstitutional population 14 years of age and over who did farm work during 1960. The report gives social and demographic characteristics as well as information on employment and earning of the Spanish American farm workers. In addition, a list of the literature cited in the report is included. (TL)

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Agricultural Economic Report No. 27

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SPANISH-AMERICAN WAGE WORKERS ON U.S. FARMS

Economic and Statistical Analysis Division ■ Economic Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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HIGHLIGHTS

Estimates of Social and Demographic Characteristics

1. Spanish-American farm wage workers numbered approximately 261,000 in 1960 which was approximately 7 percent of the 3.7 million persons who did any farm wage work during the year.

2. Approximately 40 percent (103,000) of the Spanish-Americans did migratory farm wage work in 1960. Only 9 percent of all other farm wage workers were migrants.

3. Among Spanish-Americans, the proportion of persons doing farm wage work for less than 25 days in 1960 (referred to in this report as casual workers) was only about one-third as great as among other workers (15 percent compared with 43 percent).

4. Spanish-American farm wage workers were concentrated in the West (48 percent), unlike other farm wage workers who were concentrated in the South (58 percent).

5. Spanish-Americans were not homogeneous in national origin. Among those doing farm wage work in 1960, 67 percent were born in the United States, 23 percent in Mexico, 6 percent in Puerto Rico, and the remaining 4 percent were born elsewhere.

6. Among those persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work in 1960 (referred to in this report as noncasual workers), the proportion of females among Spanish-Americans and other workers was about equal (20 percent and 22 percent, respectively).

7. A smaller proportion of the Spanish-Americans were 14-19 years of age than were other workers (24 percent compared with 35 percent).

8. The median years of school completed by the Spanish-American farm wage workers were 7.0 compared with a median of 8.4 for the 3.4 million other workers.

9. Of the Spanish-American noncasual farm wage workers, 71 percent spent most of their time in an employed status during 1960 compared with 57 percent of the other noncasual workers.

10. Among noncasual workers who spent most of their time in an employed status during the year, a larger proportion of Spanish-Americans worked primarily at farm wage work (83 percent) than did other workers (71 percent).

Estimates of Employment and Earnings

1. In 1960, Spanish-American noncasual farm wage workers had average total wage earnings of $1,205 compared with $1,354 for other whites and $777 for nonwhites. In this report, wage data refer to cash earnings only and do not include the value of perquisites.

2. Spanish-Americans in the West had higher average total wage earnings than in the South--approximately $1,400 and $900, respectively.

3. Among Spanish-American noncasual workers, migratory workers had lower total wage earnings in 1960 than their nonmigratory counterparts--$926 compared with $1,431.

4. Among noncasual male workers, a larger proportion of Spanish-Americans experienced one or more periods of unemployment in 1960 than did other males (52 percent compared with 29 percent).

5. Many hired workers do not return to work for the same farm employer the following year. Only 38 percent of the Spanish-American noncasual migratory workers and 56 percent of the Spanish-American nonmigratory workers worked 2 or more consecutive years for the same employer.

6. Of the approximately 317 million man-days of farm wage work performed by the hired farm working force during 1960, 11 percent were performed by Spanish-Americans who constituted 7 percent of the hired farm working force.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SPANISH-AMERICAN WAGE WORKERS ON U. S. FARMS

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Spanish-Americans have played an important part in the development of American agriculture, particularly in the Southwest. Farm employment has likewise been an important source of livelihood for this population. Changes in the economic and social order have affected both agriculture and the Spanish-American population. Since the end of World War II, the number of hired farm workers has increased as a proportion of the total agricultural labor force. The purpose of this report is to examine the current position of Spanish-Americans who are farm wage workers, and thereby obtain further understanding of one important aspect of the role of Spanish-Americans in agriculture.

The term "Spanish-Americans," in this study, refers to those farm wage workers born in Mexico or Puerto Rico and to other farm wage workers in whose homes Spanish was spoken during their childhood.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

For the most part, data in this report were collected for the Economic Research Service of the Department of Agriculture by the Bureau of the Census in a supplement to the February 1961 Current Population Survey (CPS). 2/ The CPS data are based on a national sample of the civilian noninstitutional population 14 years of age and over who did farm wage work at any time during 1960. Foreign nationals, imported for seasonal farm work, are excluded from the survey except for those persons in this country during the survey period.

As in all sample surveys, estimates are subject to sampling variability and may differ somewhat from the results that would have been obtained from another sample or a complete census that used the same schedules, instructions, and enumerators. The results are also subject to errors of response and reporting. It is important to emphasize that data on Spanish-Americans are from a small sample which is particularly subject to sampling variability. Thus, estimates which are presented must be used with caution.

1/ This report was prepared under the direction of Louis J. Ducoff, Chief, Farm Population Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Robert B. Pearl and Earle J. Gerson, Demographic Surveys Division, Bureau of the Census, supervised and coordinated the survey operations and tabulations of the data.

2/ See (9) for a detailed description of the Current Population Survey. Underscored figures in parentheses refer to items in Literature Cited, page 21 .

The purpose of the February 1961 supplement to the CPS, as in other years, was to provide annual data on the number, earnings, and characteristics of the hired farm working force. Such data have been collected since 1945.

This supplement was the first to collect information permitting identification among farm wage workers of persons with Spanish language background. Those farm wage workers in the survey for whom an affirmative answer was given to the questions: "Was...born in Mexico or Puerto Rico," or, if born in the United States or elsewhere, "Was Spanish spoken in ...'s home during his childhood," were considered as Spanish-Americans. This procedure may exclude some persons of older Spanish stock who have resided in the United States for a large number of years. However, the number of farm wage workers of Spanish ancestry excluded by this limitation is believed to be extremely small. In addition, this procedure resulted in the inclusion of some persons who are not popularly identified as Spanish-Americans but rather as members of other ethnic groups, such as Indians, Negroes, and Filipinos. 3/

Various terms, such as "Spanish-speaking Americans," "Latin-Americans," "Mexican-Americans," "mexicanos," and "hispanos" have been used more or less interchangeably to identify the group under discussion (6, p. 120). The term "Spanish-Americans" is used throughout this report.

Spanish-speaking Americans are not homogeneous in ethnic origin. Most of the present-day Spanish-American population in the United States is composed of persons of 20th century Mexican immigrant background. Mexican immigration to the United States did not begin on a large scale until about 1910. Immigration continued strong until the Depression in the thirties reduced the volume significantly. The number of immigrants then increased sharply during the next decade to supply wartime manpower needs (6, pp. 120-125). Available information on permanent immigration from Mexico indicates a stepping up and continuation of the upward trend in the early 1950's which reached a peak in 1956, with some decline since then (3).

Spanish-Americans in New Mexico (often called hispanos) are mostly the descendants of early Spanish colonists who married Indian women. Some of their village settlements in Northern New Mexico date back to 1598.

Puerto Ricans and Filipinos add further complexity to the ethnic composition of Spanish-speaking people in the United States. White, Negro, and Indian strains have gone into the composition of the Puerto Rican population. Some Filipino-Americans, though of Asian extraction, also speak Spanish.

The Census of Population in 1950 and 1960 identified white persons of Spanish surname in the 5 Southwestern States of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, where the overwhelming majority of this group is located. White persons of Spanish surname numbered 3,465,000 in these 5 states in 1960, a rise of more than 50 percent compared with the 2,290,000 in 1950 (table 1).

3/ In this survey tabulations were not made on the color of Spanish-American casual workers, but approximately 33,000 of the 221,000 Spanish-American noncasual workers were reported as nonwhite. Throughout this report the term "white" refers to white farm wage workers, excluding Spanish-Americans, and the term "nonwhite" refers to nonwhite farm wage workers, excluding Spanish-Americans.

Table 1.--Population of white persons with Spanish surnames, in five Southwestern States, 1950 and 1960

State	Total population		White persons, Spanish surnames			
			Number		Percentage of total	
	1950	1960	1950	1960	1950	1960
	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.
Total	21,053	29,304	2,290	3,465	11	12
Arizona	750	1,302	128	194	17	15
California	10,586	15,717	760	1,427	7	9
Colorado	1,325	1,754	118	157	9	9
New Mexico	681	951	249	269	37	28
Texas	7,711	9,580	1,035	1,418	13	15

U. S. Bureau of the Census:

(1) U. S. Census of Population: 1950, v. IV, Special Reports, pt. 3, ch. C, Persons of Spanish Surname. 1953.

(2) U. S. Census of Population: 1960. Number of Inhabitants, United States Summary. Final Report PC (1)-1A. 1961.

(3) Press Releases: 1962

Persons of Spanish Surname in Selected Areas of Arizona.
Number of Spanish Surname Persons in Selected California Areas.
Persons of Spanish Surname in Selected Colorado Areas.
White Persons of Spanish Surname in Selected New Mexico Areas.
White Persons of Spanish Surname in Selected Texas Areas.

By 1960 Puerto Ricans in the United States (excluding the 5 Southwestern States) numbered 856,000, or nearly triple the number in 1950. Filipinos in the conterminous United States numbered 106,000 in 1960 while an additional 70,000 were in Hawaii and less than 1,000 were in Alaska.

SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Agriculture in general and certain types of farming in particular have highly seasonal labor needs. The number of different persons doing farm wage work throughout a year is, of course, much larger than the number at any one time during the year. 4/

4/ The current employment data published monthly in Farm Labor by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Statistical Reporting Service, and the Monthly Report on the Labor Force by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, relate to a particular week of each month and do not estimate the total number of persons doing any hired farm labor during a year. The same was also true of the U.S. Census of Agriculture which reports farm employment during a selected reference week.

Farm operators, certain family members, and the more or less permanent hired hands constitute the majority of the farm labor force throughout the year. But during periods of peak labor needs (planting, cultivating, and harvesting), many members of the farm families and even larger numbers of hired workers enter the farm labor force for a short time.

This report is primarily concerned with a comparison of the Spanish-American segment of the hired farm working force and what is referred to in this report as "Others"--that is, the remainder of the hired farm working force.

Number and Location 5/

Approximately 3.7 million persons were farm wage workers in the United States at some time during 1960. Data on their characteristics, employment, and earnings are available in an earlier report (2). Included in the 3.7 million persons were 261,000 Spanish-Americans, about 7 percent of all farm wage workers.

Data in table 2 relate to the residence of Spanish-American and other farm wage workers at the time of the survey (February 1961). 6/ Approximately 48 percent of the Spanish-Americans

Table 2.--Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, by region, February 1961

Region	Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
Total 1/	261	100	3,432	100
Northeast	15	6	281	8
North Central	13	5	667	19
South	107	41	1, 981	58
West	127	48	504	15

1/ Figures for workers are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

5/ Data in this report include only those persons 14 years of age and older in the civilian noninstitutional population. Foreign nationals are excluded from the survey except for those persons in this country during the survey period. According to the Bureau of Employment Security, approximately 47,000 Mexican nationals were in this country at the time of the survey, but it is not possible to estimate how many of these were actually included in the sample survey. As some migrating workers follow the crop in February, minor underenumeration of workers probably occurred.

6/ The regional divisions are as follows: NORTHEAST--Maine, N. H., Vt., Mass., R. I., Conn., N. Y., N. J., Pa.; NORTH CENTRAL--Ohio, Ind., Ill., Mich., Wis., Minn., Iowa, Mo., N. Dak., S. Dak., Nebr., Kans.; SOUTH--Del., Md., Va., W. Va., N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., Ky., Tenn., Ala., Miss., Ark., La., Okla., Tex.; WEST--Mont., Idaho, Wyo., Colo., N. Mex., Ariz., Utah, Nev., Wash., Oreg., Calif., Alaska, Hawaii.

lived in the Western region, whereas the majority (58 percent) of the other farm wage workers lived in the South A large proportion (41 percent) of the Spanish-Americans also resided in the South at the time of the survey. During the 1950 Census week, there were more than 60,000 Spanish-American farm laborers and farm foreman in Texas, the "western" part of the Southern region (11). Only a small proportion of the Spanish-American farm wage workers in this survey were located in the Northeast and North Central States.

Migratory Status

In some areas of the country, the local labor supply is inadequate during periods of peak agricultural activity. Seasonal requirements are partially filled by housewives, students, and elderly persons who enter the labor force mainly when the need for agricultural labor is at the highest level. When the local farm labor force is not sufficient to meet labor demand, workers come in or may be recruited from outside the locality. Some of these migrant workers 7/ remain in the area until the seasonal work is completed and then return to their home base. Others go on to work in one or more different areas before returning to their home base. Metzler and Sargent, remarking on the work locations of Spanish-American migrants in Southern Texas, noted that:

> Some migrant families move rather erratically; others move to a definite work area and return. A third of the migrant families in the survey had moved to and from only one location away from home base. An additional half had added one or two work locations to the first and then returned. One family in five might be regarded as widely migratory; that is, it had gone to four, five, or up to eight different work areas during the 1956 season (7, p. 22).

A larger proportion of the Spanish-American farm wage workers are migratory workers than are other farm wage workers (table 3). In 1960, 103,000 (39 percent) of the 261,000 Spanish-Americans did some migrant farm wage work. In contrast, only 9 percent or 306,000 of the 3.4 million other farm wage workers were involved in migrant farm wage work. Consequently, Spanish-Americans composed 25 percent of the 409,000 migrant farm wage workers in 1960 but only 5 percent of the 3.3 million nonmigratory workers.

Sex and Age

For both Spanish-Americans and others, women comprised about one-fourth of the farm wage workers (table 4). In 1960, a little less than one-fourth of the Spanish-American farm wage workers were between 14 and 19 years of age (table 5). Slightly more than one-third of the other farm wage workers were in this age group. Conversely, workers 20 years and older were relatively more numerous among Spanish-Americans than other farm workers.

7/ A migrant worker is a person who (1) left his home (definite living quarters, not just a "home county") temporarily to cultivate or harvest crops in some other county or counties, with the expectation of returning home or (2) had no usual place of residence (no regular home, no regular living quarters elsewhere) if he did farm work in two or more counties during 1960. The farm wage worker was not considered a migrant if (1) he was employed at farm wage work only in the county in which he lived, or (2) he commuted daily across a county line to do farm wage work and returned home each night, or (3) he did farm wage work in one county for part of the year, then made a more or less permanent move to another county during the year and also did farm wage work in the second county.

Table 3.--Migratory status and sex of Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, 1960

Migratory status and sex	All farm wage workers		Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 1/	3,693	100	261	100	3,432	100
Male	2,664	72	194	74	2,470	72
Female	1,029	28	67	26	962	28
Migratory	409	11	103	39	306	9
Male	315	8	79	30	236	7
Female	94	3	24	9	70	2
Nonmigratory	3,284	89	158	61	3,126	91
Male	2,348	64	114	44	2,234	65
Female	936	25	43	17	892	26

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

Table 4.--Duration of farm wage work and sex of Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, 1960

Duration of farm wage work, and sex of workers	All farm wage workers		Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 1/	3,693	100	261	100	3,432	100
Male	2,664	72	194	74	2,470	72
Female	1,029	28	67	26	962	28
25 days or more	2,162	100	221	100	1,940	100
Male	1,698	79	177	80	1,521	78
Female	463	21	44	20	419	22

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

Table 5.--Age and sex of Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, 1960

Age and sex	All farm wage workers		Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 1/	3,693	100	261	100	3,432	100
14-19 years	1,279	35	62	24	1,218	35
20 years and older	2,414	65	199	76	2,214	65
Male	2,664	100	194	100	2,470	100
14-19 years	963	36	44	23	919	37
20 years and older	1,701	64	150	77	1,551	63

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

Country of Birth

Approximately 67 percent of the Spanish-American farm wage workers in 1960 were born in the United States (table 6). Mexico was the birthplace of about 23 percent of the Spanish-American farm wage workers. Only 6 percent were born in Puerto Rico, and the remaining 4 percent were born elsewhere. 8/

Table 6.--Birthplace of Spanish-American farm wage workers living in the United States, the South, and West, February 1961

Birthplace	United States		South		West	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 1/	261	100	107	100	127	100
United States	175	67	85	80	78	61
Mexico	60	23	18	16	40	32
Puerto Rico	15	6	---	---	1	1
Elsewhere	11	4	4	4	7	6

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

Spanish-Americans born in the United States were about equally distributed between the South and the West. Those born in Mexico were concentrated in the West.

Education 9/

Cowhig, in a recent publication presenting detailed information on the education and earnings of the entire hired working force of 1960, commented as follows:

> Analysis of the data from the February 1961 CPS showed that the educational level of the hired farm working force was low, and that in 1960 about 65 percent of all days of hired farm labor were contributed by persons with no more than a grammar school education. Comparisons with information from the 1940 and 1950 decennial censuses indicated that the average level of education of farm wage workers has remained substantially unchanged over the past two decades (1, p. 16).

8/ In a 1957 study of migratory farm workers in five cities of Southern Texas, three-fourths of the Spanish-American migrants were natives of the United States while the remaining one-fourth were born in Mexico. Of those household heads born in Mexico, nearly two-thirds had moved to Texas prior to 1930 (7, p. 10).

9/ There are minor differences between numbers of workers reported in this section of the report and in some other sections. The differences are due to the fact that workers for whom years of school completed were not reported were excluded from the special tabulations on which this section of the report was based. The same situation exists in the "Employment and Earnings" part of this report for the section on "Unemployment" (p. 17).

The following analysis is in terms of "years of school completed" without any measurement of quality of education attained (table 7). Persons not reporting on years of school completed are excluded from the analysis.

Table 7.--Years of school completed by Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, 1960 1/

Years of school completed	Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 2/	216	100	3,367	100
0-4 years	53	24	497	15
5-8 years	112	52	1,410	42
9-11 years	31	14	975	29
12 years and more	21	10	485	14
Median years	7.0		8.4	

1/ Excludes persons for whom years of school completed was not reported.
2/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

The median number of school years completed by the 216,000 Spanish-American farm wage workers for whom data were obtained was 7.0 compared with 8.4 years for the other 3.4 million farm wage workers. Functional illiterates numbered 1 in 4 among Spanish-Americans compared with about 1 in 7 for other farm wage workers. "Functional illiterates" are persons who complete less than 5 years of school (1, p. 5; 8; 10). About 24 percent of the Spanish-American workers had some high school education compared with 43 percent of the other workers.

Chief Activity

Table 8 provides data on the chief activity of noncasual wage workers during 1960. A larger proportion of the Spanish-American noncasual farm wage workers spent more of their time in an employed status during the year than did other farm wage workers (71 percent compared with 57 percent). Attending school was the chief activity of Spanish-Americans and other farm wage workers who did not report some type of employment as their primary activity during 1960.

Of the 157,000 Spanish-Americans who spent most of their time in an employed status in 1960, 131,000, or 83 percent, worked chiefly at farm wage work compared with 71 percent of the other workers. The proportion of other employed workers who were engaged primarily in other farm work (operation of a farm or unpaid family work) and in nonfarm work during 1960 was, in each case, nearly double that of their Spanish-American counterparts (table 8). Thus Spanish-American noncasual workers are more dependent upon farm wage work than are other noncasual farm wage workers. From this study, it cannot be determined if this situation is through personal choice or due to lack of nonfarm experience and selectivity on the part of nonfarm employers.

One reason the "other" group had a larger proportion of farm wage workers who were "not employed" for most of the year is that the proportion of teenage workers (14 to 19 years) was also considerably higher among the other group than among the Spanish-Americans. For

this teenage group "attending school" is their expected chief activity, and as table 8 shows, a much larger proportion of "other" workers reported attending school as their chief activity during 1960 than did Spanish-American workers (20 percent compared with 11 percent).

Also indicative of the Spanish-American worker's greater dependence on farm wage work is the large proportion of workers who spent considerable time at farm wage work. More than half of the Spanish-American males did 150 days or more of farm wage work in 1960 compared with slightly more than one-fourth of the other male workers. Conversely nearly two-fifths of the other male workers did less than 25 days of farm wage work compared with less than one-tenth of the Spanish-American men (table 9).

Table 8.--Chief activity of Spanish-Americans and others during 1960

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Chief activity	All farm wage workers		Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers 1/	2,162	100	221	100	1,940	100
Employed	1,264	58	157	71	1,107	57
Farm work	1,042	48	141	64	901	46
Farm wage work	913	42	131	59	782	40
Other farm work	129	6	10	5	119	6
Nonfarm work	222	10	16	7	206	11
Not in the labor force and unemployed	898	42	64	29	834	43
Keeping house	250	12	21	10	229	12
Attending school	421	19	24	11	398	20
Other 2/	227	11	19	8	207	11

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals. 2/ Includes a small number of workers who reported looking for work as their chief activity during the year.

Table 9.--Duration of farm wage work for Spanish-American and other male workers, 1960

Duration of farm wage work	Spanish-Americans		Others	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers	194	100	2,470	100
Less than 25 days	17	9	949	39
25-149 days	76	39	841	34
150-249 days	52	27	306	12
250 days or more	49	25	374	15

EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

This section of the report deals with comparisons of the employment experience and earnings of Spanish-Americans and other farm wage workers. The earnings discussed include only cash wages received from farm and nonfarm sources. Thus, the value of perquisites and income from other sources are not included. Data are included on the extent of unemployment of hired workers, continuity of farm employment, and the man-days of hired work performed. We show how the employment and earnings of Spanish-American and other farm wage workers are related to such factors as: color, sex, region of residence, migratory status, and chief activity. 10/

Color, Region, and Sex

Data in this section (with the exception of the discussion on sex composition) relate to the noncasual segment of the hired farm working force.

Color.-- Spanish-Americans had average total wage earnings estimated at $1,205 in 1960 (table 10). Other white farm wage workers averaged $1,354, while the estimate for nonwhite farm wage workers was $777. The average daily wage earnings from farm wage work were estimated at $6.40 for Spanish-Americans, $7.00 for other whites, and $5.15 for nonwhites.

Spanish-Americans received 83 percent of their total wages from farm work compared with 75 percent for other whites and 84 percent for nonwhites. The proportion of wage work time spent at farm wage work was: Spanish-American--88 percent; other whites--81 percent; nonwhites--85 percent.

Region.-- Spanish-Americans in the West averaged 183 days of farm wage work at an average of $6.85 per day as compared with 115 days at $5.70 per day for Spanish-Americans in the South. The total average annual earnings of Spanish-Americans was $1,397 in the West and $883 in the South.

Sex.--Data in this section relate to men 20 years of age and older, the age and sex group most dependent on farm wage work. Spanish-American men averaged 56 days more of farm wage work in 1960 than did other men (table 11). The average daily farm wage received by the two groups was estimated at $6.80 for Spanish-American males and at $6.95 for other males. Other males averaged 54 days of nonfarm wage work, while Spanish-American males averaged 28 days. In regard to total employment and earnings, Spanish-American men worked 30 days more than did other men and averaged $1,524 in total wages as compared to $1,455 for other males. Spanish-American male workers earned over 80 percent of their wages from farm work compared with slightly over 60 percent for other male workers.

Migratory Status

Since a relatively large proportion of Spanish-Americans are migratory workers, the influence of migratory status on employment and earnings is of special interest. The data in table 12 refer only to noncasual workers. Spanish-American migratory workers were in an unfavorable

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10/ For a more detailed analysis of variations in wage rates see (4).

Table 10.--Region and color: Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work, for Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Region and color of worker	Number of workers 1/	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/
	Thou.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
United States 3/	2,162	167	1,125	6.70	139	879	6.30	28	246	8.65
Spanish-Americans	221	178	1,205	6.75	157	1,006	6.40	21	199	9.45
Others	1,940	166	1,115	6.70	137	864	6.30	29	251	8.55
White	1,139	179	1,354	7.60	145	1,016	7.00	34	338	9.95
Nonwhite	801	149	777	5.20	126	649	5.15	23	128	5.60
South 4/	1,157	149	797	5.35	125	645	5.20	24	152	6.35
Spanish-Americans	78	151	883	5.85	115	656	5.70	36	227	6.40
Others	1,079	148	791	5.35	125	644	5.15	23	147	6.35
White	378	161	1,057	6.60	136	846	6.25	25	211	8.50
Nonwhite	702	142	648	4.55	120	536	4.50	22	112	5.05
West 4/	463	182	1,635	9.00	157	1,393	8.85	25	242	9.65
Spanish-Americans	116	193	1,397	7.20	183	1,256	6.85	10	141	5/13.55
Others	347	178	1,715	9.65	148	1,439	9.70	30	276	9.20
White	279	167	1,624	9.75	134	1,319	9.80	33	305	9.35
Nonwhite	6/68	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals. 2/ Rounded to the nearest 5 cents. 3/ Data are not shown for the Northeast and North Central regions due to the small number of Spanish-American farm wage workers in those areas. 4/ Machine tabulations were not available on the color of Spanish-Americans by regions. For this reason, it was impossible to determine what relative proportions "other white and nonwhite groups" should be reduced to allow for Spanish-American workers. As most Spanish-Americans in the South and West were believed to be white, they were all subtracted from the "other white" group. The result may be a slight underenumeration of "other white" and a slight overenumeration of "other nonwhite". However, due to the small number of nonwhite Spanish-Americans, no significant differences in data would be expected if the color apportionment were possible. 5/ This average daily nonfarm wage is extremely high. Part of this may be due to (1) a high degree of sampling variability (the number of Spanish-Americans doing nonfarm wage work was very small), and (2) errors of response and reporting. 6/ Averages not shown where base is less than 75,000 persons.

Table 11.--Persons 20 years of age and older, by sex: Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

Sex	Number of workers 1/	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/
	Thou.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
All workers	2,414	153	1,129	7.40	107	709	6.65	46	420	9.20
Spanish-Americans	199	179	1,237	6.90	155	1,010	6.50	24	227	9.35
Male	150	212	1,524	7.20	184	1,247	6.80	28	277	9.95
Others	2,214	150	1,119	7.45	102	682	6.65	48	437	9.20
Male	1,551	182	1,455	7.95	128	888	6.95	54	567	10.40

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.
2/ Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

Table 12.--Migratory status and sex: Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Migratory status and sex	Number of workers 1/	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/
	Thou.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
All workers	2,162	167	1,125	6.70	139	879	6.30	28	246	8.65
Migratory	317	157	1,016	6.50	123	819	6.65	34	197	5.90
Spanish-Americans	99	159	926	5.85	136	777	5.70	23	149	6.55
Male	78	177	1,055	5.95	157	915	5.85	20	140	6.95
Female	3/ 21	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	218	155	1,057	6.80	117	838	7.15	38	219	5.70
Male	172	173	1,222	7.05	130	964	7.40	43	258	5.95
Female	3/ 46	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nonmigratory	1,845	170	1,143	6.75	142	889	6.25	28	254	9.20
Spanish-Americans	122	194	1,431	7.40	174	1,191	6.85	20	240	12.10
Male	99	212	1,648	7.75	189	1,361	7.20	23	287	12.25
Female	3/ 23	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	1,722	168	1,122	6.70	140	867	6.20	28	255	9.05
Male	1,349	188	1,316	7.00	158	1,017	6.45	30	299	9.95
Female	373	94	423	4.50	73	327	4.45	21	96	4.55

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.
2/ Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.
3/ Averages not shown where base is less than 75,000 workers.

earnings position as compared with Spanish-American nonmigrants. In 1960 nonmigrant Spanish-Americans averaged an estimated $1,431 in total wage earnings as compared to $926 for migrant Spanish-Americans. Nonmigratory workers averaged 194 days of wage work as compared with 159 for migratory workers.

Chief Activity

Most of the noncasual hired farm workers who were in an employed status during most of 1960 worked chiefly at farm wage work (table 13). This is true of Spanish-Americans as well as of other farm wage workers.

Spanish-American noncasual workers principally employed at farm wage work during 1960 worked 218 days and earned $1,449 at their primary job. Additional employment at nonfarm wage work brought total days worked up to 231 and total earnings up to $1,581. Other noncasual workers primarily employed at farm wage work worked 237 days and earned $1,607 from this employment. Average annual wage earnings and days worked from both farm and nonfarm sources totaled $1,695 and 249 days in 1960.

Data in table 14 relate to the migratory status and chief activity of noncasual workers only. The total wage earnings of Spanish-American nonmigratory workers employed chiefly at farm wage work in 1960 averaged $1,831, of which over 90 percent came from farm wage work. The small number of Spanish-American migratory workers employed chiefly at farm wage work does not permit a detailed presentation of their employment and earnings. However, limited data support the conclusion that the total wage earnings of Spanish-American migrants working chiefly at farm wage work in 1960 were approximately $600 less than that of Spanish-American nonmigrants. Time lost by migrants in moving from one job to another may have had a significant effect on their earnings.

Income Distribution

There is considerable variability in individual income within the occupational group of farm wage workers. Data in this section concern the distribution of total cash wages of Spanish-American noncasual workers and other noncasual farm wage workers and differences by migratory status of workers (table 15).

More than two-fifths (44 percent) of the Spanish-Americans earned $1,000 or more in total wages (farm and nonfarm) during 1960. Nearly two-fifths (39 percent) of the other workers earned this amount. About one-fourth (24 percent) of the Spanish-Americans earned less than $400 compared with two-fifths (37 percent) of the other workers. Female workers, both Spanish-American and others, were highly concentrated in lower cash wage levels.

Approximately one-third of the Spanish-American migrants earned $1,000 or more in total wages (farm and nonfarm) during 1960. More than two-fifths (42 percent) of the other migrant workers earned this amount. About one-eighth of both Spanish-American and other migrants earned less than $200 during the year.

Among nonmigratory Spanish-Americans, over half (53 percent) earned $1,000 or more in total cash wages during 1960. This compared with nearly two-fifths (38 percent) of the other nonmigrant workers. Approximately 31 percent of the Spanish-Americans earned $2,000 or more compared with 19 percent of other nonmigrant workers.

Table 13.--Chief activity: Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Chief activity	Number of workers 1/	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/
	Thou.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
All workers	2,162	167	1,125	6.70	139	879	6.30	28	246	8.65
Spanish-Americans	221	178	1,205	6.75	157	1,006	6.40	21	199	9.45
Employed	157	222	1,554	7.00	195	1,294	6.65	27	260	9.75
Farm work 3/	141	221	1,520	6.90	209	1,398	6.70	12	122	9.95
Farm wage work	131	231	1,581	6.85	218	1,449	6.65	13	132	9.95
Not in the labor force and unemployed	4/64	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	1,940	166	1,115	6.70	137	864	6.30	29	251	8.55
Employed	1,107	233	1,692	7.25	191	1,294	6.80	42	398	9.35
Farm work 3/	901	228	1,571	6.90	216	1,478	6.85	12	93	7.80
Farm wage work	782	249	1,695	6.80	237	1,607	6.80	12	88	7.35
Not in the labor force and unemployed	834	78	351	4.50	66	294	4.45	12	57	4.80

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals. Data not shown separately for all chief activities.

2/ Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

3/ Includes operation of a farm and unpaid family work, as well as farm wage work.

4/ Averages not shown where base is less than 75,000 persons.

Table 14.--Migratory status and chief activity: Average days worked and wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Migratory status and chief activity	Number of workers 1/	Farm and nonfarm			Farm			Nonfarm		
		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned		Days worked	Wages earned	
			Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/		Per year	Per day worked 2/
	Thou.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.	No.	Dol.	Dol.
Migratory	317	157	1,016	6.50	123	819	6.65	34	197	5.90
Spanish-Americans	99	159	926	5.85	136	777	5.70	23	149	6.55
Farm work	3/ 60	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Farm wage work	3/ 53	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nonfarm wage work	3/ 7	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	218	155	1,057	6.80	117	838	7.15	38	219	5.70
Farm work	94	205	1,432	7.00	185	1,329	7.20	20	103	5.05
Farm wage work	90	210	1,473	7.00	189	1,366	7.20	21	107	5.05
Nonfarm wage work	3/ 36	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nonmigratory	1,845	170	1,143	6.75	142	889	6.25	28	254	9.20
Spanish-Americans	122	194	1,431	7.40	174	1,191	6.85	20	240	12.10
Farm work	81	237	1,801	7.60	226	1,655	7.30	11	146	13.85
Farm wage work	77	241	1,831	7.60	230	1,678	7.30	11	153	13.85
Nonfarm wage work	3/ 9	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	1,722	168	1,122	6.70	140	867	6.20	28	255	9.05
Farm work	807	231	1,586	6.85	220	1,495	6.80	11	91	8.35
Farm wage work	692	254	1,724	6.80	243	1,639	6.75	11	85	7.95
Nonfarm wage work	170	261	2,368	9.05	77	445	5.80	184	1,923	10.45

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals. Data not shown separately for all chief activities.

2/ Rounded to the nearest 5 cents.

3/ Averages not shown where base is less than 75,000 workers.

Table 15.--Annual wages earned at farm and nonfarm wage work for Spanish-Americans and others, by migratory status and sex, 1960: Percentage distribution

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Migratory status and sex	Number of workers 1/	Total percentage	Percentage distribution of farm wage workers who earned--									
			Less than $100	$100 to $199	$200 to $399	$400 to $599	$600 to $999	$1,000 to $1,399	$1,400 to $1,999	$2,000 to $2,999	$3,000 to $4,999	$5,000 and more
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
All workers	2,162	100	5	14	16	10	15	11	10	10	7	2
Spanish-Americans	221	100	4	7	13	13	19	11	12	12	9	0
Male	177	100	2	5	9	14	18	12	14	15	11	0
Female	2/ 44	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	1,940	100	5	15	17	10	14	11	10	10	6	2
Male	1,521	100	4	9	15	10	15	13	12	12	8	2
Female	419	100	11	36	24	11	10	3	1	2	1	1
Migratory	317	100	4	8	12	17	21	13	15	6	3	1
Spanish-Americans	99	100	6	5	9	20	27	11	12	8	2	0
Male	78	100	0	4	6	23	27	13	15	10	2	0
Female	2/ 21	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	218	100	3	9	13	16	17	14	17	6	4	1
Male	172	100	2	5	9	15	18	17	20	7	5	2
Female	2/ 46	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nonmigratory	1,845	100	6	15	17	9	14	10	9	11	7	2
Spanish-Americans	122	100	4	8	16	8	11	10	12	16	15	0
Male	99	100	3	5	12	7	11	12	12	20	18	0
Female	2/ 23	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Others	1,722	100	6	16	17	9	14	10	9	10	7	2
Male	1,349	100	4	10	16	9	15	13	11	12	8	2
Female	373	100	12	37	24	10	9	3	1	2	1	1

1/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

2/ Distribution not shown where base is less than 75,000 workers.

Unemployment

Data in table 16 refer to only noncasual male farm wage workers. In 1960 nearly one-third (31 percent) of all males reported some unemployment (that is they were without a job and were looking for work). The proportion of Spanish-American farm wage workers experiencing some unemployment in 1960 was nearly twice as great as among other farm wage workers (52 percent compared with 29 percent). However, among the unemployed workers the proportion of Spanish-American males and other males with 3 or more periods of unemployment in 1960 was about equal (more than 80 percent).

Table 16.--Periods of unemployment for Spanish-American and other males, 1960: Percentage distribution 1/

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Group	Number of workers 2/		Periods of unemployment		
			None	1 or 2 periods	3 or more periods
	Thou.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
All male workers	1,634	100	69	5	26
Spanish-Americans	116	100	48	8	44
Others	1,519	100	71	4	25

1/ Data in this table and this section of the report are prepared from special tabulations discussed in footnote 9, page 7. 2/ Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group total.

Consecutive Years of Farm Wage Employment

In this discussion, "crew" leaders or contractors of hired farm labor are not considered as farm employers. It was required that the farm wage work be done for the same farm operator but not necessarily on the same farm.

Among farm wage workers, a change of employers from one year to the next, as within any one year, is a common occurrence. In 1960, less than half (48 percent) of the Spanish-American noncasual workers and only three-fifths (62 percent) of the other noncasual workers, had worked for two or more consecutive years for the same farm operator (table 17). The remainder of these two groups had either worked for a different farm operator the previous year or had entered the hired farm working force for the first time in 1960. In 1959, roughly 8 percent of all noncasual migrant workers entered the hired farm working force for the first time while the comparable figure for nonmigratory workers was 15 percent (5).

Over two-fifths (44 percent) of the Spanish-American nonmigrants had entered the hired farm work force for the first time or had not worked for two or more consecutive years for the same employer. The comparable figure for other workers was 37 percent. Approximately 1 in 8 nonmigrants, both Spanish-American and other farm wage workers, had done 10 or more consecutive years of farm wage work for the same farm operator.

Table 17.--Consecutive years of work for same employer, for Spanish-Americans and others, by migratory status and sex, 1960 1/

(Persons who did 25 days or more of farm wage work)

Migratory status and consecutive years of work for same employer	Spanish-Americans				Others			
	Total		Male		Total		Male	
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All farm workers	221	100	177	100	1,940	100	1,521	100
No consecutive years 2/	116	52	90	51	729	38	595	39
2 years	19	9	17	10	338	17	250	16
3 years	33	15	23	13	252	13	206	14
4-5 years	27	12	21	12	252	13	181	12
6-9 years	11	5	11	6	174	9	135	9
10 years or more	15	7	14	8	195	10	154	10
Migratory	99	100	78	100	218	100	172	100
No consecutive years 2/	61	62	51	66	91	42	74	43
2 years	4	4	4	6	50	23	38	22
3 years	18	18	13	16	31	14	25	14
4-5 years	14	14	8	10	21	10	13	8
6-9 years	1	2	1	2	13	6	13	8
10 years or more	0	0	0	0	11	5	9	5
Nonmigratory	122	100	99	100	1,722	100	1,349	100
No consecutive years 2/	54	44	39	39	638	37	521	39
2 years	15	12	13	13	288	17	212	16
3 years	15	13	11	11	221	13	181	13
4-5 years	13	10	13	13	230	13	168	12
6-9 years	10	8	10	10	161	9	122	9
10 years or more	15	13	14	14	184	11	145	11

1/ Figures for workers are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals.

2/ Includes persons entering hired farm working force for the first time and those not working for same farm operator the previous year.

The establishment of desirable employer-employee relationships may be extremely difficult because of the high rate of labor turnover for an individual farm employer. Unquestionably, much farm work is not complex, and a particular type of work varies little from farm to farm. But, in many situations, the employer and employee are total strangers, and too little time may be spent in establishing any degree of knowledge and understanding between them. The worker may not know exactly what is expected of him, and the farm employer may not know the skill of the individual worker; consequently, misunderstandings may develop, and special abilities may go unused. Furthermore, the employer may be hesitant in providing training which would qualify the worker for a higher wage unless he has some assurance of receiving the worker's services in subsequent years.

Man-days of Hired Labor 11/

In 1960, Spanish-American workers accounted for a larger proportion of the total man-days of farm wage work than they comprised of the hired farm working force. More than 317 million man-days of domestic farm wage work were utilized during 1960 (table 18). More than 35 million (11 percent) of these man-days of farm wage work were performed by Spanish-Americans who constituted 7 percent of the hired farm working force.

Table 18.--Number of farm wage workers and man-days of farm wage work by Spanish-Americans and others, 1960

Group	Number of workers		Man-days worked 1/	
			Total number	Percentage of total
	Thou.	Pct.	Thou.	Pct.
All workers	3,693	100	317,261	100
Spanish-Americans	261	7	35,279	11
Others	3,432	93	281,982	89

1/ The number of days on which any farm wage work was done.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Perhaps the most significant point to be emphasized in regard to Spanish-American farm wage workers is that as compared to other persons whose chief activity was farm wage work, Spanish-Americans were neither much better nor much worse off. Although farm wage workers are a minority even among Spanish-American workers, they comprise a larger proportion of the Spanish-American labor force than is true for the general population. As compared to their share of the total population, Spanish-Americans are much more heavily concentrated among migratory farm laborers, a group which often has to endure poor living conditions and limited educational

11/ "Man-days" refers to days on which any farm wage work was performed, regardless of the number of hours worked.

opportunities alongside of low incomes and irregular employment. The concentration of the Spanish-Americans in the hired farm working force is due partly to custom and to difference in education, as well as other reasons. An extended discussion of the reasons for this concentration is, however, outside of the scope of the present report.

It is difficult to foresee what the future holds for Spanish-American farm wage workers. In the foreseeable future, the total number of persons involved in agricultural production will continue to decline as technology advances and farms are consolidated. If the total number of persons in the hired farm working force does not decline, the average duration of work for these workers will probably continue to decline, thus increasing the need for nonfarm employment.

It is likely that, as for all farm workers, Spanish-American departures from the hired farm working force will be determined, in large part, by the availability of steady nonfarm jobs. Continued improvement of the economic status of Spanish-Americans, as of all Americans, would be facilitated under conditions of full employment. In addition, if Spanish-Americans could improve and increase their nonfarm skills and if opportunities for Spanish-American workers continued to expand, the improvement in economic status would be accelerated.

Stabilization of the farm work force and increase in the amount of employment obtained during the year at farm and nonfarm work are important objectives of policies that deal with employer and worker problems in agriculture. Stabilization is advanced by the strengthening and continuing improvement in the public employment services in areas accessible to our rural population, and by greater participation of workers and growers in existing programs of employment services, such as the "Annual Worker Plan." The employment period during the year could be lengthened by increasing the job versatility of the worker, keeping traveling distances for migratory workers at a minimum, training workers to operate the machines which are displacing them, and placing underemployed farm workers in nonfarm jobs, either temporarily or permanently, when they are not needed in agriculture. 12/ Programs to improve the health, education, and working conditions of migratory workers in general would also benefit the Spanish-American farm wage worker.

Importation of foreign nationals has caused considerable controversy over its effects on the wage rates and length of employment of domestic farm laborers. 13/ The most recent extension of Public Law 78 places more stringent requirements on the importation of foreign farm workers. Under the amendment to the law, domestic workers must have been offered comparable "wages, standard hours of work, and working conditions." A new section to the law stipulates that workers recruited under this title must (1) be limited to temporary or seasonal occupations, and (2) not be employed to operate or maintain power-driven, self-propelled harvesting, planting, or cultivating machinery. This amendment should prove beneficial to domestic workers, both Spanish-American and others.

Thus, the fate of the Spanish-American farm wage worker is tied inextricably to the welfare of the Nation as a whole. Full employment, and better living conditions for farm wage workers, in general, will go a long way in improving the status of this small but important segment of the Spanish-American population.

12/ For additional measures on stabilizing the work force and lengthening the employment period see (12).

13/ During 1960, about 335,000 foreign workers were admitted for temporary employment in U. S. agriculture. For more historical data and descriptive information on foreign workers see (13).

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